

**Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority  
Telephone Conference  
July 12, 2012 – 11:00 a.m.**

**Meeting Notes**

**Board Members Participating:** Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Ron Averill, Lewis County Commissioner; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine; Alan Vannell, Town of Bucoda; Ken Estes, City of Montesano; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Terri Willis, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; J. Vander Stoep, Town of Pe Ell

Chairman Raines called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. and asked Mr. Kramer to summarize what today's meeting would entail.

Mr. Kramer stated that at the last meeting the Flood Authority Board scheduled weekly phone calls for the purpose of discussing projects that are ready to move forward for the Jobs Now Act with Flood Authority recommendations. Mr. Boettcher and Mr. Kramer have done research on the Airport Levee and the Adna levee improvements. Those two projects were discussed by the Executive Committee last week and are ready for consideration by the full Flood Authority. Mr. Boettcher created a spreadsheet with current information on all the projects and those will be discussed more next week in the context of the projects being discussed today.

Mr. Boettcher stated the first document he emailed was a memo providing background on how these projects were identified. The second document is the review and approval form for the Airport Levee Phase I project. The third document is similar for the Adna project; the fourth is a reference document which came out of the Projects Subcommittee and will be reviewed later.

The Airport project is a project to build the first phase of a two-phase project, which is to widen the existing levee on the inside. Phase II is to elevate that levee. The cost for Phase I is approximately \$1.2 million. Mr. Karpack has done some calculations regarding the amount of fill going inside that levee and the amount of displacement. The project will add 34 acre-feet of fill inside the levee which is 0.91 percent of the area behind the levee. It appears this job could be doable within the requirements of the bill, starting late summer or early spring, providing about 17 jobs directly and indirectly supported, and will not create any adverse impacts. Those are the three major criteria the Executive Committee looked at.

The Adna Rails to Trails is to restore a drainage system to the condition when a railroad grade was operated by a railroad. That grade has been transferred to State Parks to create a rails to trails. During that transfer process the maintenance ceased, causing the drainage system to become full of vegetation. The purpose is to restore the drainage system so the water cannot back up. Regarding downstream impacts, there are no hard numbers but it is believed that by returning the grade to what was there no impacts are anticipated. This project can get going this year even though it will require more permitting and regulatory review than the airport levee. The project would support 3.1 jobs.

Mr. Kramer asked what would be left in the levee fund after these two projects are approved. Mr. Boettcher stated the spreadsheet shows the airport levee project will be about \$1.2 million; the Adna project about \$244,000 which is a total of \$1.48 million, leaving \$391,000.

Mr. Kramer asked if there were questions regarding the airport levee.

Mr. Estes asked who the contracting agent would be in both of these projects.

Commissioner Averill stated both are within Lewis County so funding would come through Lewis County. Mr. MacReynold stated the airport would be the lead agency but the county would be the treasurer of that fund.

Commissioner Averill stated that Lewis County would be doing the Adna project in cooperation with State Parks.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked if there is any mitigation planned for downstream effects from the airport project.

Mr. MacReynold stated because of the low impact there is no plan for any mitigation at this time. He stated there would be flexibility to do what needs to be done if it got to that point.

Mr. Kramer stated that Mr. Boettcher mentioned the percentage of fill being proposed during Phase I was inside the levee. Mr. Karpach gave estimates of fill as 34 acre feet which is relative to the 65,000 acre feet of storage in the Twin Cities during the 2007 flood. The amount being put in there is less than .057%, which is very small.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked if the Flood Authority is only being asked about Phase I of this project. Mr. Kramer stated that was correct. Mr. Boettcher tried to word the description to indicate the signing of this document does not commit the Flood Authority or the Tribe to Phase II at this point.

Mr. Kramer asked for questions. There were none. He then stated that all of the jurisdictions of the Flood Authority were represented at this phone meeting. He stated unless there was objection, everyone supported it.

Mr. Pinn stated he had just received an email from Mr. Ed Johnstone, Fisheries Policy Spokesperson with the Quinault Indian Nation. He asked if this letter applies to what was being discussed.

Mr. Kramer stated he had received the email also, which he read. In summary, the letter said that the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN) opposed the projects, that the levees are likely to adversely affect fishing. Mr. Johnstone felt that the QIN was being ignored and that the proposals did not have adequate studies on environmental impacts and urged that the projects not be approved.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated during the retreat with the Ruckelshaus Center, big projects, such as retention or the I-5 wall, were to be discussed with the Quinault Indian Nation. Mr. Vander Stoep did not think the discussion was about these projects. He continued to say that the Washington State Legislature directed the Flood Authority to spend money on these two projects, as well as the Bucoda levee, and it did not give the Flood Authority the discretion to not do them. The Flood Authority has been directed to spend money on these two projects. The airport levee has been in place since 1943 and whatever impact that levee has it has had since 1943. This project does not expand it on the river side, but on the inside. The Adna levee was damaged in the 2007 flood and repairs have been made to it – it is not a new facility that will have impacts on water quality.

Chairman Raines agreed with Mr. Vander Stoep. Commissioner Averill stated the Adna levee is not a levee. It was a railroad berm and had been improved over the years. It had culverts and drainage and those culverts, due to lack of maintenance in the 1990s, built up and caused it to become a levee. The County's goal is to clean out those drains so it goes back to its original condition.

Mr. MacReynold stated the modeling done regarding the airport levee shows any impact from the proposed fill is minimal at best. Even though the QIN identified a short time frame, the legislature proposed that time frame. He encouraged the Board to approve both projects.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked about the status of the government to government consultation with the QIN. Mr. Kramer stated he knows it is the State's plan to initiate that consultation but does not know if it has started. He stated Mr. Johnstone is raising a significant concern that this process has violated and has been disrespectful of the QIN's rights. Commissioner Valenzuela suggested the Flood Authority reiterates that it is working together within the Flood Authority and legislation and the legislation is initiating the government to government consultation.

Commissioner Valenzuela stated Mr. Johnstone did raise some issues and it is not ideal to move forward in the face of these objections. There is legislation that authorizes us to go forward with these. For our purposes today, knowing that some action is in process to get the government to government consultation with the QIN, the Flood Authority should do its part to move these projects forward. All that does is get them in front of the Chehalis Tribe to get its approval. She would not want what Mr. Johnstone is saying to hold up the Flood Authority's part.

Commissioner Willis stated the Flood Authority is taking an action today that is only one step of several steps to get a project to fruition. There will be other scrutiny through the permitting process that will address these issues. She agrees that the Flood Authority needs to take a step in order for the Tribe to take its step. The Governor has talked about having these consultations – put the onus back on the Governor.

Mr. Pinn stated he thought the projects should be approved. He asked that Chairman Raines send a reply back noting the comments made by everyone.

Mr. Kramer stated he and Mr. Boettcher would draft a letter for Chairman Raines' signature that addresses the points made by the QIN and include copies to the Governor's office. Keith Phillips will also be called to provide information to him with the hopes of moving forward with the government to government consultations.

Mr. Kramer asked if there were objections to the letter. There were none.

Mr. Kramer asked if there were objections to either the Adna or Airport Levee projects. There were none.

Mr. Boettcher stated there were two minor edits to make. On the Adna project the description of the school states "high school" and it should be the "middle school and high school." The Airport description states the total project Phase I and Phase II will prevent flooding. A more accurate statement would be it would reduce the risk of flooding.

There were no objections. Mr. Kramer stated the changes would be made and copies provided for Chairman Raines and Chairman Burnett to sign within the next day or two.

Commissioner Willis updated the Flood Authority on the Wishkah Rd project. She stated Grays Harbor County has written up descriptions that should go to the rest of the Flood Authority. Grays Harbor County would like to hire a consultant who can give three options of what might take place on Wishkah Rd that will help keep flooding off of the road. There are three issues: destruction of property, safety issues (due to water over the roadway and emergency vehicles not getting through), and some environmental issues. These issues would be proposed to the consultant; Grays County Harbor would be the lead. The next step is to move the project forward for funding.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated if OFM allows the remaining dollars under the levee heading to be used for design and engineering for Wishkah, or Bucoda, he would be supportive of that.

Mr. Kramer stated Mr. Boettcher is working on the spreadsheet that he sent out earlier which will be fully updated and can be discussed at the meeting next week, including the Wishkah and other potential levee projects for the remaining \$390,000. They will check with OFM to see if design is supported by them and will talk with the Chehalis Tribe and will have a full report next meeting.

Commissioner Averill stated at the last meeting both the river gage project and the critter pads were approved. He asked the status of those projects. Mr. Kramer stated the gage project was signed by Chairman Raines and by the Tribe. Mr. Boettcher is working with the Conservation District to fill out the form for the critter pads. Hopefully that will be done by the end of the week for the Tribe's consideration.

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.